Will Eisner
COMIC INDUSTRY
AWARDS
WINNER

HARVEY AWARDS
WINNER

KAMOME
SHIRAHAMA

# Witch Hat Atelier

VOLUME
10

KAMOME SHIRAHAMA

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VOLUME

10

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WITCH HAT ATELIER

♦

KAMOME
SHIRAHAMA

# Chapter 52

RICHEH'S ALL SOLD OUT!

OO

OOO

OOH!

...UNTIL THE WHOLE WORLD KNOWS MY NAME.

AND NOW THAT I HAVE FOUND MY ONE TRUE CALLING, IT'S ONLY A MATTER OF TIME...

WELL DONE, LITTLE MISS! THAT'S QUITE THE FEAT!

GEEZ. YOUR FIRST SHOT AT PUTTING A CONTRAPTION UP FOR SALE, AND YOU SOLD EVERY COPY.

PUMP

PUMP

HMPH.

WELL, YOU MAY'VE FOUND YOUR NICHE. I'LL GRANT YOU THAT.

AND YOU'VE GOT OPTIONS. YOU CAN FIGURE OUT SPELLS TO MEET PATRONS' NEEDS LIKE ME...

...OR IF YOU'RE *REALLY* CONFIDENT, YOU CAN OPEN UP YOUR OWN MAGIC SHOP AND DRAW WHATEVER YOU LIKE.

MY VERY OWN MAGIC SHOP...?

I PROMISED MYSELF I WAS GONNA STUDY A *BUNCH* OF OTHER THINGS.

AH. WELL, THAT'S A MUST.

YEAH. EVEN THE PROS GOTTA KEEP LEARNING.

OH. BUT...

IF YOU WANT MY ADVICE, TAKE A QUICK JAUNT DOWN A MYRIAD OF PATHS INSTEAD OF STUBBORNLY STICKING TO ONE.

THAT WAY, WHEN YOU RETURN TO THE STARTING POINT, YOU'LL FIND YOU'VE GOT A WHOLE SLEW OF NEW TOOLS TO WORK WITH.

キラ SPARKLE

YEAH... THAT MAKES SENSE.

I HADTA LEARN ABOUT LIGHT MAGIC IN ORDER TO MAKE THE RINGS AND BANGLES.

YOU'RE A REGULAR GUIDANCE ORB.

AM I ON THE RIGHT TRACK?

GLANCE

NO KIDDING.

GLANCE

SPEAKING OF RINGS...

...WHAT HAPPENED TO THE REST OF OUR FLOCK? THEY'RE TAKING THEIR SWEET TIME GETTING BACK.

EVEN *BRUSHBUDDY'S* NOWHERE TO BE FOUND.

PWEEEEEEEEEE!!

PWEEEEEEE!

PWUFF PWUFF PWUFF

PWEEEEEE!

PWUFF

UM... WHO'RE *YOU?*

HM? MIGHT YOU BE A...?

?!

YANK

HURRY!

GET INSIDE!

!

OVER HERE! I SAW SOMETHING!

SHH! STAY QUIET!

WH-WHAT WAS THAT ALL ABOUT?!

YOU'LL GIVE ME AWAY!

*...SO THAT MEANS HE'S **NOT** A WITCH... RIGHT?*

*HE'S NOT WEARING A CAP...*

FWAP

HERE!

THIS IS THE TENT!

ANY TRACE?

NONE.

FSHHHH!

...

I COULD'VE SWORN I SAW SOMEONE GO IN THERE.

HRMMM...

HOW ODD...

FSH

WUP

GRMM...!

JUST A LITTLE MORE...!

POP

...

ARE YOU ALL RIGHT? SORRY TO GET YOUR CLOTHES ALL DUSTY.

PHEW! GOOD THING I HAD MY SANDTENT STAFF ON HAND.

パラパラ

PATTER

I WOULD'VE BEEN IN QUITE THE PINCH WITHOUT YOUR ASSISTANCE.

IT'S NO TROUBLE AT ALL.

...LADY WITCH OF THE DAWN'S FIRST LIGHT.

MANY THANKS FOR YOUR HELP...

WHY EXACTLY ARE THOSE MEN CHASING YOU?

WHEN IT SEEMED LIKE YOU WERE IN TROUBLE, I KINDA REACTED WITHOUT THINKING, BUT...

GOODNESS! UM...

THANK YOU... FOR YOUR THANKS.

"Dawn's First Light"?

DEAR ME. WHERE ARE MY MANNERS? I AM EOLEO EZREST...

SIMPLY PUT...

THEY PURSUE ME BECAUSE I AM AN INDIVIDUAL *WORTH* PURSUING.

?

?

?

?

...SON OF DEANRELDY EZREST, SUPREME MONARCH OF THIS GOOD PENINSULA.

WHICH, IF YOU'LL FORGIVE MY SAYING, MAKES ME CROWN PRINCE AND HEIR APPARENT TO THE KINGDOM OF ZOZAH.

WH...?!

Y...?!

WHERE?

DID YOU HEAR THAT?!

THE PRINCE IS HERE?!

WHERE?

YOU'RE A *PRINCE* ??!!

UM! I'M VERY FLATTERED, BUT PLEASE DO KEEP YOUR VOICE DOWN!

...RUNNING AROUND ALL SNEAKY-DEAKY?

I MEAN... WHAT IS A *PRINCE* DOING...

SORRY! I'M SO SORRY! I JUST COULDN'T BELIEVE...

IT'S BEST TO AVOID OUTBURSTS, BECAUSE... WELL, I THINK YOU SEE WHY.

PRINCE EOLEO! SHOW YOURSELF!

Shhh!

...

YOU'D REALLY LIKE TO KNOW?

WOW. I WOULD'VE NEVER IMAGINED.

IS IT REALLY SO HARD TO BELIEVE?

WELL... YEAH!

IT NEVER OCCURRED TO ME THAT A PRINCE...

...MIGHT WANT TO WALK AROUND A FESTIVAL AND GO SHOPPING LIKE ANYBODY ELSE.

IF A WITCH CAN GET HER SPELL INTO THE PROCESSION, SHE'S PRETTY MUCH GUARANTEED TO SELL TONS OF COPIES TO THE ROYAL FAMILY AND OTHER NOBLES.

THE WHOLE TRADITION OF SILVER EVE STARTED IN ORDER TO SHOW OFF SPELLS TO THE KING!

THE SPELLS MY LORD FATHER PURCHASES ARE NOT FOR HIMSELF...

...BUT FOR THE COUNTRY. MAGIC EXISTS TO AID THE *PEOPLE*, AFTER ALL.

IT JUST SEEMS THAT A PRINCE...

...WOULD BE ABLE TO BUY WHATEVER KINDA SPELL HE LIKES, AS OFTEN AS HE WANTS!

PWEEE!

AND I MAY BE A PRINCE, BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN I'M FREELY GRANTED WHATEVER I DESIRE.

QUITE THE CONTRARY. THE THINGS I WISH FOR MYSELF...

...I MUST SECURE WITH MY OWN TWO HANDS.

...

WELL, IS THERE SOME PARTICULAR SPELL YOU'RE AFTER?

IF YOU'D LIKE, I'D BE HAPPY TO HELP YOU FIND IT!

IF SO...

I SUPPOSE I DO HAVE ONE SMALL REQUEST.

YOU ARE CERTAIN YOU DO NOT MIND?

...

YOU AND I MUST TALK.

AGOTT!

THERE YOU ARE!

I I FWISH

!

AGOTT?

# Witch Hat Atelier

# Chapter 53

ISN'T THIS THE SEAL YOU'VE BEEN WORKING ON FOR WEEKS?

WHY WOULD YOU THROW IT AWAY LIKE THIS?!

AGOTT...?

WHAT'S THIS YOU'RE BURNING?

!!

THIS...

BECAUSE IT NO LONGER SERVES ANY PURPOSE...

BWFF

BWFF

IF *HER* EYES WILL NEVER WITNESS ITS SPLENDOR, THEN THE SPELL MEANS NOTHING TO ME.

SO IN JOINING THE PROCESSION, IT WASN'T THE KING'S ATTENTION YOU WERE HOPING TO GRAB...

I SEE...

YOUR MOTHER, ADINA ARKLAUM.

...BUT THAT OF THE HEAD LIBRARIAN AT THE TOWER OF TOMES.

...TO MAKE A SPECIAL APPEARANCE ON THE NIGHT OF THE PROCESSION.

BUT I'VE HEARD IT'S TRADITION FOR THE HEAD LIBRARIAN...

IT'S RARE FOR *ANY* OF THE LIBRARIANS TO STEP AWAY FROM THE TOWER.

...

...AND TO KEEP AN EYE OUT FOR CANDIDATES THAT MIGHT BE SUITED TO SERVE AS FUTURE LIBRARIANS.

IT'S HER DUTY TO OBSERVE THOSE SPELLS THAT WILL BE ADDED TO THE TOWER'S COLLECTION...

GWIP

I *HAVE* TO PROVE THEM ALL WRONG...!

THEY BANISHED ME FROM MY OWN HOUSE. BUT THEY'LL REGRET IT!

THEY REFUSED TO BELIEVE ME.

THEY SNEERED AT ME.

ONCE I SHOW THEM...

...THAT *I* CAN CAST THE GREATEST SPELL THEY'VE EVER SEEN...

...IN FRONT OF *EVERYONE*...

THEN THEY'LL SEE.

*THEN* THEY'LL KNOW WHAT I'M CAPABLE OF!

Haaah...

RUB

RUB

PLIP

SHF

I KNOW. YOU DON'T HAVE TO SAY IT.

I'M ONLY THINKING OF MYSELF.

IT'S JUST THAT I...

I KNEW FROM THE BEGINNING MASTER OLLY WOULD PROBABLY FORBID IT.

HE ALREADY LECTURED ME ONCE ABOUT NOT SHOWING OFF, AND ABOUT REMEMBERING THE REAL PURPOSE OF MAGIC.

THERE MAY BE MORE TO HIS CAUTION THAN YOU REALIZE.

YOUR SPELL MIGHT BE CAST WITH A PARTICULAR PAIR OF EYES IN MIND. BUT AS PART OF THE PROCESSION, MANY OTHERS PAIRS WILL SEE IT, TOO.

AND MOST WILL BELONG TO THOSE WHO KNOW YOU VERY LITTLE.

I AM WELL AWARE OF HOW CAPABLE YOU ARE, AND OF HOW HARD YOU'VE WORKED.

I THINK YOU MIGHT FIND THAT OLLY, TOO, THINKS MORE HIGHLY OF YOU THAN YOU IMAGINE.

BUT THOSE QUALITIES ALONE DO NOT MAKE A RESPLENDENT WITCH.

...

...IS A PARTICULARLY USEFUL MEASURE OF A WITCH'S TRUE ABILITY?

WOULD I BE CORRECT IN ASSUMING YOU DON'T BELIEVE THAT AN EVERYDAY CONTRAPTION...

I CANNOT ARGUE THAT THE FLICKERING OF AN ORDINARY LANTERN DRAWS FAR LESS ATTENTION THAN A SERPENT OF FLAME SENT SOARING ACROSS THE SKY.

AND A SIMPLE VAPOR BUBBLE, QUIETLY COLLECTING MOISTURE FOR US TO DRINK AND WASH...

...IS NOT NEARLY AS IMPOSING AS A GREAT FUNNEL OF WATER THAT REACHES THE CLOUDS.

THE SERPENT AND VORTEX WILL FIND MINIMAL USE COMPARED TO THE LANTERN AND THE BUBBLE.

BUT I SUSPECT THAT IN OUR CURRENT ERA OF PEACE...

...!

...AND MORE MINDFUL OF WHAT SHE MUST *NOT*.

IN EXPOSING HER WORK TO THE EYES OF THE MASSES, A WITCH MUST BE LESS CONCERNED WITH WHAT SHE *CAN* CAST...

...YOU RISK BECOMING ENTANGLED IN THE DESIRES OF THOSE WHO WOULD USE YOU TO THEIR OWN ENDS.

BUT I WOULD URGE YOU TO REMEMBER THAT THE MOMENT YOU LOSE SIGHT OF WHAT IT IS YOU CREATE...

I WON'T DISMISS YOUR DESIRE FOR VINDICATION.

USED TO *WHOSE* ENDS?

WHAT DO YOU MEAN...? TANGLED UP IN *WHOSE* DESIRES?

...WE WITCHES MUST ALWAYS—

TO ENSURE THAT NEVER COMES TO PASS...

UH... YOUR HIGHNESS?

I'M ALWAYS HAPPY TO HELP, BUT...IS THIS *REALLY* ALL YOU WANT?

HOW DO I LOOK? DOES IT SUIT ME?

IT'S BEEN MY DREAM TO BECOME A WITCH, IF ONLY FOR A DAY.

IT'S PERFECT!

YES!

フィルTwIRL

I'M GLAD YOU UNDERSTAND.

PRECISELY!

IT'S SURE TO MAKE AN *EXCELLENT* DISGUISE TO BROWSE THE FESTIVAL UNNOTICED!

OH, YES! IT'S VERY DASHING!

IF I DIDN'T KNOW OTHER-WISE, I'D THINK YOU WERE A REAL WITCH!

!

AND YOU, LADY WITCH, LOOK A RADIANT SPRING PRINCESS WITH MY CLOAK 'ROUND YOUR SHOULDERS!

...WE TRANSFORM WHO WE ARE.

...THAT THE OUTFITS WE CHOOSE ARE ALSO A BIT LIKE MAGIC? SIMPLY BY PUTTING THEM ON...

TELL ME, DEAR PRINCESS, HAS IT EVER OCCURRED TO YOU...

SHF

Hmm... Come to think of it, this is *really* nice fabric...

BEAM

GOODNESS!

HIGH FIVE!

YES! OH, YES, YOUR HIGHNESS!

I'VE SAID THE *EXACT* SAME THING! OH, THIS IS SO COOL! YOU AND I ARE TOTALLY GOING TO GET ALONG!

PFFT!

HEHE!

HEHE! IT SEEMS MY GESTURE...

...WAS MISCONSTRUED. I'D MEANT TO ESCORT YOU HAND IN HAND, LADY WITCH.

HEHE!

AHAHA! HOW VERY AMUSING!

AH, UM...

THROB

THROB

IN SPEAKING WITH YOU, LADY WITCH, I SEE A FLICKER OF HOPE FOR A DREAM I'D THOUGHT IMPOSSIBLE.

YOU MUST EXCUSE ME!

NO! IT'S NOTHING! HAHA!

ARE YOU MAKING *FUN* OF ME?! WHAT DID I DO?!

WH...?! HEY!

I SUPPOSE IT'S JUST THAT I'VE SPENT SO LONG HEARING...

...THAT WITCHES ARE NOT ORDINARY PEOPLE LIKE US, BUT SOMETHING ELSE ENTIRELY.

...THAT THOSE WHO USE MAGIC AND THOSE WHO DO NOT COULD SOMEDAY BE FAST FRIENDS.

PERHAPS IT'S NOT SUCH AN ABSURD IDEA...

DEAR ME. I'VE GONE AND SAID SOMETHING STRANGE.

PLEASE, PUT MY WORDS OUT OF YOUR MIN—

JUST A MOMENT!

WHAT DO YOU MEAN?!

WHY *WOULDN'T* WE BE FRIENDS?!

WE BOTH THINK MAGIC IS GREAT, RIGHT?!

AND WE HAVE SUCH A FUN TIME TALKING!

WHAT?

GWIP

...THERE'S *NOTHING* STRANGE ABOUT IT!

Erm, a "Teti-high-five" ...?

FWISH

WE EVEN GAVE EACH OTHER A TETI-HIGH-FIVE!

OF *COURSE* YOU AND I CAN BE FRIENDS!

IN FACT, IN *MY* MIND, WE ALREADY ARE!

WE'VE BEEN FRIENDS PRETTY MUCH SINCE THE MOMENT WE MET!

IF WE ARE FRIENDS, THEN THAT MEANS...

OH, YOU DON'T KNOW HOW HAPPY THIS MAKES ME!

DO... DO YOU TRULY MEAN THAT?

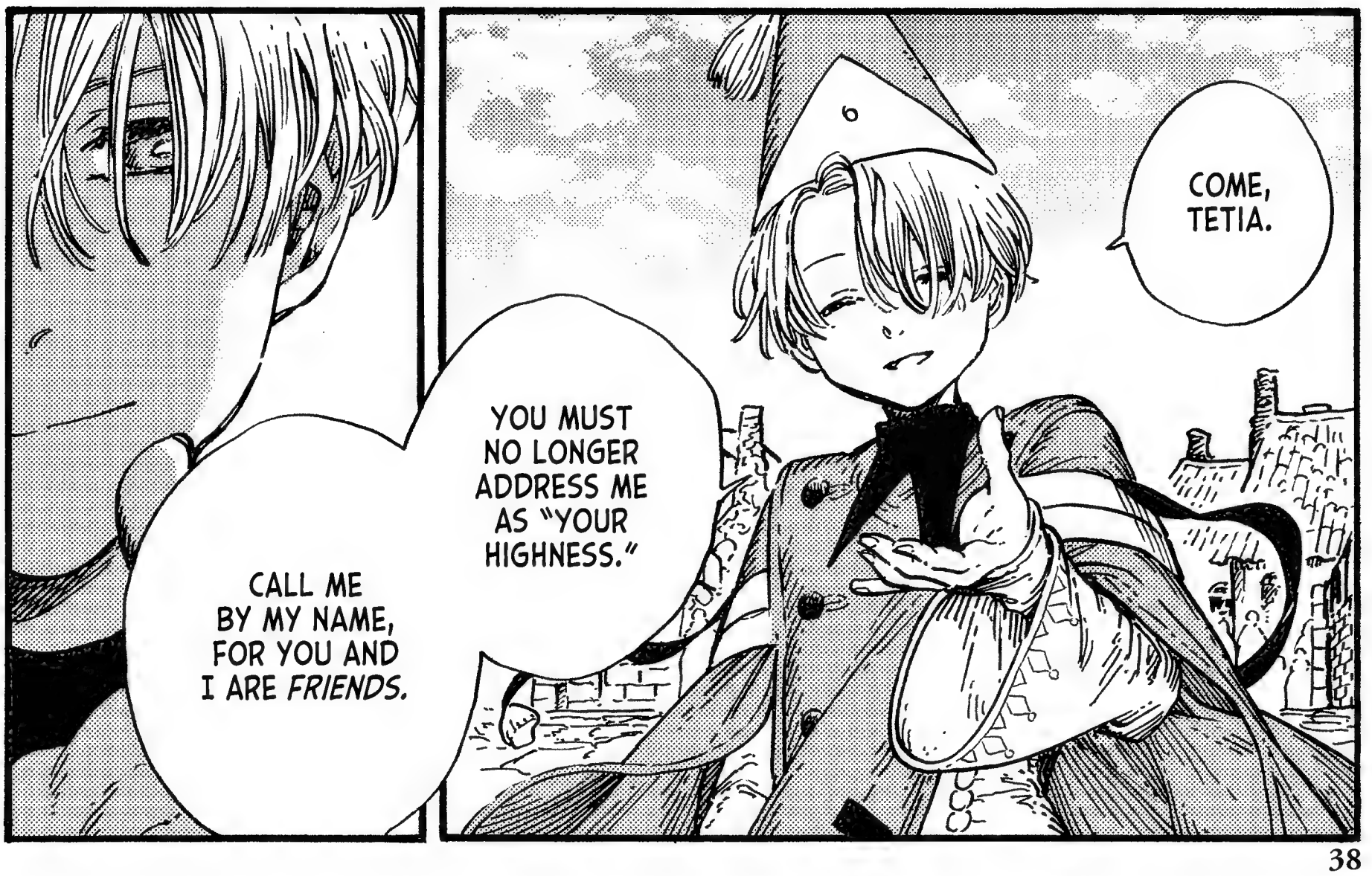
ME, A PRINCE, AND YOU, A WITCH...?

KING AND WITCH, SIDE BY SIDE.

STANDING TOGETHER, AN UNSTOPPABLE DUO!

...WE CAN BE AS IN THE TALES OF YORE.

OH, NO...
SHVR


COME, TETIA.
YOU MUST NO LONGER ADDRESS ME AS "YOUR HIGHNESS."
CALL ME BY MY NAME, FOR YOU AND I ARE *FRIENDS.*

IT IS A WONDROUS, BOTTOMLESS WELLSPRING OF POWER.

IT MAY BE DRAWN UPON AGAIN AND AGAIN, AND IT WILL NEVER GO DRY.

MAGIC IS INFINITE.

PLISH

BUT ONLY WE POSSESS THE CUP THAT DRAWS FREELY OF THOSE WATERS...

...AND IT IS PARAMOUNT WE NOT BESTOW IT UPON THE RULER OF THIS LAND, NOR ANYONE ELSE IN EZREST'S ROYAL HOUSE.

FOR THE PENINSULAR KING IS A MAN OF TWO FACES AND TWO NAMES.

KER

SPLSH

KER

CLNK

SQUEEZE

LORD FATHER, I'M HOME!

LORD FATHER!

EOLEO. WHAT A SURPRISE.

YES, FATHER.

I'VE FOUND WHAT IT IS I WISH TO HAVE.

I DIDN'T EXPECT YOU BACK FROM THE FESTIVAL UNTIL WELL PAST DARK.

HAVE YOU HAD YOUR FILL OF SILVER EVE ALREADY?

ALL THAT REMAINS NOW...

...IS TO FIGURE OUT HOW TO MAKE IT MINE!

IT WOULDN'T HAVE TO BE THIS WAY.

NOT IF THE POWER OF MAGIC WAS IN OUR—IN THE *NATION'S*— GRASP.

YOU'VE LOST ANOTHER SPECIM—

ANOTHER *PATIENT.* I'M SORRY TO SEE IT.

...

AT TIMES, KING DEANRELDY GOES BY ANOTHER NAME... THE KING OF *LIFE.*

A MONARCH WHO EXCELS IN THE SCIENCE OF LIFE AND DEATH...

...THE GREATEST MASTER OF THE MEDICAL ARTS IN OUR REALM...

...AND THE LAST OF A VERY OLD, VERY PROUD HOUSE KNOWN FOR ITS SKILL WITH HEALING-CRAFT...

...THAT WAS WIPED FROM HISTORY BY FELLOW WITCHES ON THE DAY OF THE PACT.

PRINCE EOLEO...

PRINCE...

IT *SHOULD* BE EVERY GIRL'S DREAM TO MEET A PRINCE.

...WHEN HE TALKED ABOUT THE FRIENDSHIPS OF THE DAYS OF YORE?

...THAT TINY SHIVER...

SO WHY DID I FEEL...

JUST 'CAUSE HE'S A PRINCE...

STILL...

...IT'S NOT **RIGHT** TO SAY...

...THAT TWO PEOPLE CAN'T BE FRIENDS. IS IT?

...SHOULDN'T MEAN HE CAN'T BEFRIEND SOMEONE HE LIKES.

YEAH...

COME TO THINK OF IT...

WHAT'S WITH TETIA? SHE'S BEEN MOPING ALL EVENING.

I DUNNO.

*EVERYONE'S* BEEN ACTING WEIRD SINCE THEY GOT BACK.

SKRCH SKRCH SKRCH SKRCH

I HEAR YOU'VE SWITCHED GEARS, AGOTT. NOW YOU'RE MAKIN' A CONTRAPTION?

...THAT'S RIGHT.

MASTER QIFREY SAYS HE'LL EVALUATE PUTTING IT UP FOR SALE...

...DEPENDING ON WHAT I COME UP WITH.

THAT IS, IF I CAN FINISH IT BEFORE THE FESTIVAL'S OVER.

Bring it on!

!

YOU PUT SOMETHIN' SOLID TOGETHER, I PROMISE TO GIVE IT A SOLID LOOK.

WELL, COUNT ME IN.

AH. I SEE.

...THANKS. THAT'S VERY KIND OF YOU.

SWIP

COCO! YOU'RE UP!

YES... UM... ACTUALLY, I WANTED TO ASK YOU SOMETHING.

ARE YOU FEELING ANY BETTER?

Tetia said you'd looked a bit ill.

UM, MASTER QIFREY...?

...

...I WAS WONDERING IF, UM, MAYBE *I* COULD PERFORM IN THE PROCESSION.

THE TRUTH IS...

EXCUSE ME?!

YOU HAVE GOT TO BE KIDDING.

...

# Witch Hat Atelier

NO?!

YOU WON'T LET ME?!

Y...

# Chapter 54

SO, THERE'S NO WAY...?

WELL, QUITE HONESTLY...

THE WING-CLOAK. THAT'S THE NAME YOU CHOSE FOR IT, YES?

I'M NOT CERTAIN YOUR CONTRAPTION IS READY FOR SALE.

IT MAKES FOR A CHARMING DEMONSTRATION WHEN ANCHORED TO THE GROUND. THE FESTIVAL-GOERS LOVE IT.

BUT IN FREE FLIGHT, WHAT HAPPENS IF THE WIND PICKS UP AND THE USER LOSES CONTROL, OR STRAYS TOO CLOSE TO A PEGASUS OR A DRAGON?

CONTRAPTIONS POSING GRAVE RISKS MUST BE EVALUATED BY THE WISE IN FRIENDSHIPS BEFORE THEY'RE PUT UP FOR GENERAL SALE.

L4 SLUMP

...BUT IF I'M TO BE VERY HONEST, I RATHER DOUBT THAT THIS CONTRAPTION HERE...

...WOULD PASS THE INSPECTION.

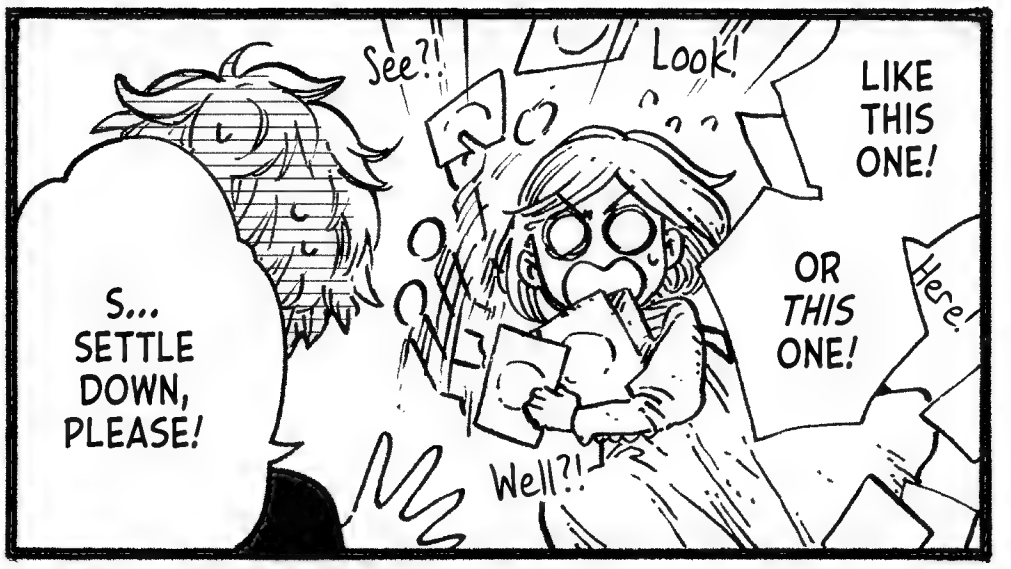
YOU *ARE* QUALIFIED TO TAKE PART IN THE PROCES-SION...

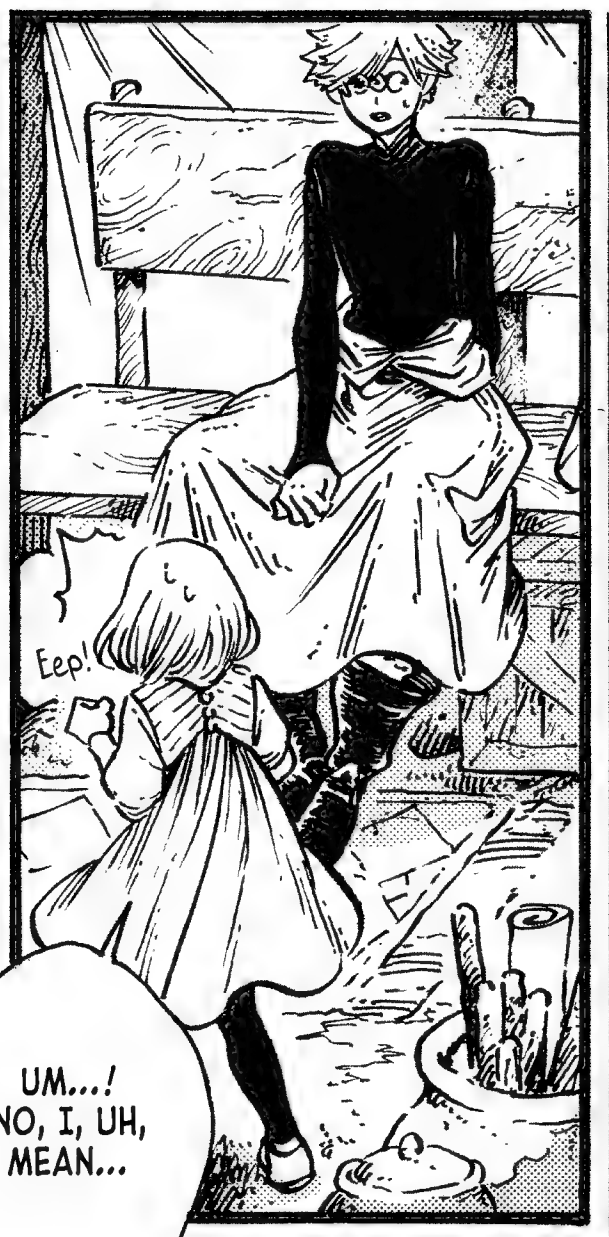
*WAIT. WHAT DO I CARE?!*

PHEW

YES,
I SUPPOSE
SOME OF THOSE
MIGHT HAVE
POTENTIAL...
...BUT WHY
NOT TAKE IT SLOW?
YOU COULD START
BY PUTTING SOME-
THING UP FOR SALE
IN THE TENT!


Hl!!
FWIP
W...WELL, WHAT
IF I SUBMIT SOME
*OTHER* SPELL FOR
CONSIDERATION?!


S...
SETTLE
DOWN,
PLEASE!
See?!
Look!
LIKE
THIS
ONE!
OR
*THIS*
ONE!
Here!
Well?!


Eep!
UM...!
NO, I, UH,
MEAN...

BUT IT *HAS*
TO BE THE
PROCESSION,
OR ELSE...!

COCO! WAIT!

I'LL BE BACK WHEN THEY'RE READY!

I'M GONNA GO THINK UP SOME OTHER SPELLS!

I JUST REALLY, REALLY...

...REALLY, *REALLY* WANNA BE IN IT!

?

?

Every time I try to have a talk with one of my apprentices, she runs away.

It's been like this all day.

...

SHAKE

SHAKE

SHAKE

*IT'S LIKE I WAS **GLAD** COCO HIT A SNAG TRYING TO GET INTO THE PROCESSION.*

*WHAT IN THE WORLD...*

*...WAS THAT MOMENT OF RELIEF?*

GETTING A SPELL INTO THE PROCESSION TAKES SERIOUS WORK, AND—

OF COURSE SHE'S NOT GONNA WALTZ HER WAY IN!

BUT ALL THAT ASIDE...

WHY'S SHE SUDDENLY SO INTENT ON BEING A PART OF IT, ANYWAY?

A FEW CLOCK MARKS EARLIER...

IT'S LIKE I SAID.

THE TWO OF YOU...

...ARE GONNA FIND A WAY TO BE IN THE SILVER EVE PROCESSION.

AS YOU ARE DOUBTLESS AWARE, NO MAGIC MAY PASS WITHIN THE WALLS OF CASTLE EZREST.

THE SALE OF ANY CONTRAPTION SHOWN OFF IN THE PROCES-SION...

...THUS TAKES PLACE IN THE SHORE-SIDE PAVILION, JUST BEHIND THE POSTERN WALL.

THIS IS THE ONLY TIME WHEN A WITCH OF NO PARTICULAR STATUS...

...MAY APPROACH HIS MAJESTY, KING DEANRELDY EZREST, WITHOUT AROUSING SUSPICION.

YOU TWO WILL WIN ENTRANCE TO THAT PAVILION...

...AND INVITE US TO JOIN YOU THERE.

IN OTHER WORDS, YOU ARE TO HELP US SECURE AUDIENCE WITH THE KING.

WE MEAN HIM NO HARM.

OUR INTENT IS SIMPLY TO—

MMPH!

CLAMP

AND WHAT ARE YOU GONNA DO TO HIM WHEN YOU GET THERE?!

THE KING?!

ENOUGH. WE DON'T OWE YOU ANY EXPLANATION.

THE ONLY THING YOU NEED TO WORRY ABOUT IS GETTIN' US IN TO SEE THE KING.

FWUM

I KNOW IT WON'T BE *TOO* HARD FOR A COUPLE OF WITCHES LIKE YOU.

JUST STICK TO YOUR REGULAR ROUTINE. THE KING LOVES THAT "SPELLS TO HELP THE COMMON PEOPLE" CRAP.

VWOOSH

DON'T LET ME DOWN.

REMEMBER, THE THREE OF US ARE BOUND BY *FATE.*

AND BESIDES ...

...WHATEVER SPELL YOU COME UP WITH WILL BE HELPIN' *ME*, SO YOU CAN FEEL GOOD ABOUT IT, TOO!

SHWOOM

HE'S GONE...

MASTER QIFREY SAYS THE WINGCLOAK'S NOT FIT FOR SALE AS IT IS.

I GUESS SO...

SO WHAT ARE YOU GONNA DO? COME UP WITH A NEW SPELL?

I'LL HAVE TO THINK UP SOMETHING THAT CAN PASS APPROVAL FOR THE PROCESSION, BUT THERE ISN'T MUCH TIME.

NO. IT'S OKAY, BUT...

SORRY TO LEAVE THIS ALL ON YOUR SHOULDERS, COCO.

I HAVEN'T EVEN FINISHED THE FIRST TEST YET, SO I'M NOT ALLOWED TO SUBMIT.

...DID IT ALL COME TO THIS?

HOW...

IT'S A *FESTIVAL.* WE'RE SUPPOSED TO BE ENJOYING THE MAGIC AND HAVING FUN...

...BUT INSTEAD, WE'RE WALLED OFF IN OUR OWN LITTLE WORLD.

DON'T...

DON'T YOU THINK MAYBE WE SHOULD TELL MASTER QIFREY AND MASTER OLLY?

IF WE EXPLAINED EVERYTHING, WOULDN'T THEY—

NO!

OUT OF THE QUESTION!

SURE, THEY MIGHT HELP *US* OUT.

BUT THERE'S NO TELLING WHAT THEY'LL DO WITH CUSTAS!

*...OR WIPE HIS MEMORY AND STRIP HIS MAGIC AWAY!*

*THEY'LL PROBABLY HAND HIM OVER TO THE KNIGHTS MORALIS...*

WELL... NO, BUT...

THEY WOULDN'T, HUH? ARE YOU SURE ABOUT THAT?

NO! THEY WOULDN'T!

IF WE'RE UNLUCKY, *OUR* MINDS MIGHT BE WIPED OF ANY MEMORY OF HIM!

THE FACT THAT HE'S EVEN INVOLVED WITH HER MEANS THERE'S NO CHANCE THE ADULTS WE KNOW WILL PROTECT HIM.

SHE'S OBVIOUSLY A BRIMMED CAP, RIGHT?

*THINK ABOUT IT. THAT GIRL HE'S WITH, ININIA OR WHATEVER.*

YOU *HAVE* TO KEEP THIS SECRET.

GWIP

BUT... TARTAH...

*PLEASE, COCO.*

ZLOOM!!

IF WE ALL JUST CALM DOWN AND TALK IT OVER...

...AND TAKE THE TIME TO SAY WHAT'S REALLY ON OUR MINDS...

...THEN I'M SURE WE CAN—

I...I'M GONNA GO FIND CUSTAS AGAIN!

?!

GRAB ZII

SHF

WAIT. YOU MUSTN'T GO FARTHER.

HEY! GET YOUR HANDS OFF—

COCO?!

BEYOND THIS STAIRWAY LIES THE MUCKPOOL.

IT IS NOT A PLACE SAFE FOR CHILDREN TO TREAD ALONE. NOT EVEN WITCHES SUCH AS YOU...

...COCO AND TARTAH.

MISTER DAGDA...?!

H-HEY! YOU'RE...!

...SO THE WATER MAY FLOW PURE AGAIN WHEN IT REJOINS THE RIVER BEYOND THE GATES.

THE WASTEWATER FROM THE CROWN CITY'S RESIDENCES FOLLOWS CANALS TO THE EDGE OF TOWN...

...WHERE IT PASSES THROUGH A SEWER GRATE THAT CLEANSES WITH MAGIC...

...EVERY GRATE IN EVERY CITY HAS A SPOT WHERE THE FILTH POOLS AND STAGNATES.

BUT NO MATTER HOW CLEVER THE SYSTEM...

NOT ONLY WASTE, BUT PEOPLE, TOO.

IT IS TO HERE THE CITY CASTS ITS UNDESIRABLES, TO FORM SLUMS AMONG THE FILTH.

*THAT* IS THE MUCKPOOL.

IT IS A PLACE FRAUGHT WITH DANGER, AND ONE CUSTAS KNOWS WELL.

YOU MEAN CUSTAS ISN'T WITH YOU ANYMORE?

I HAD THOUGHT PERHAPS TO FIND HIM HERE...

...BUT I SURELY DID NOT EXPECT TO RUN INTO YOU TWO.

IT SEEMS CUSTAS AND I MUST'VE GOTTEN SEPARATED ALONG THE WAY.

I RECALL LEAVING KALHN TOGETHER. NEXT THING I KNOW, I AWOKE HERE IN THE CROWN CITY.

THAT'S RIGHT...

BACK AT KALHN...

...CUSTAS SAID ALMOST THE EXACT SAME THING.

HEY, THAT'S RIGHT...!

I WORRY FOR HIM.

IN ALL THE WORLD, CUSTAS IS THE CLOSEST THING I HAVE TO A FAMILY.

HE DID?

TRUTH BE TOLD, I'M ALSO A PRODUCT OF THE MUCKPOOL.

...

IMAGINE THAT.

I NEVER WOULD'VE THOUGHT...

I USED TO LIVE A ROUGH LIFE...

...AND I'VE DONE MORE THAN A FEW THINGS I'M NOT PROUD OF.

BUT I HAD TO. IT WAS THE ONLY WAY I COULD SURVIVE.

INSTEAD, I WAS HANDED A ROUNDLUTE AND TAUGHT TO PLAY.

WHEN THEY CAUGHT ME AND TIED ME UP, I WAS READY FOR THE END.

ONE DAY...

I SNUCK AMONG A MUMMERS' TROUPE TO SEE WHAT I COULD STEAL.

...IF YOU KNOW HOW TO PLAY IT.

BECAUSE THE LUTE YOU THOUGHT TO PILFER WILL FETCH YOU FAR MORE COIN...

MUSIC...

...GRANTS THE MEANS TO SUBSIST WITH YOUR BODY, YOUR VOICE, AND YOUR MIND ALONE.

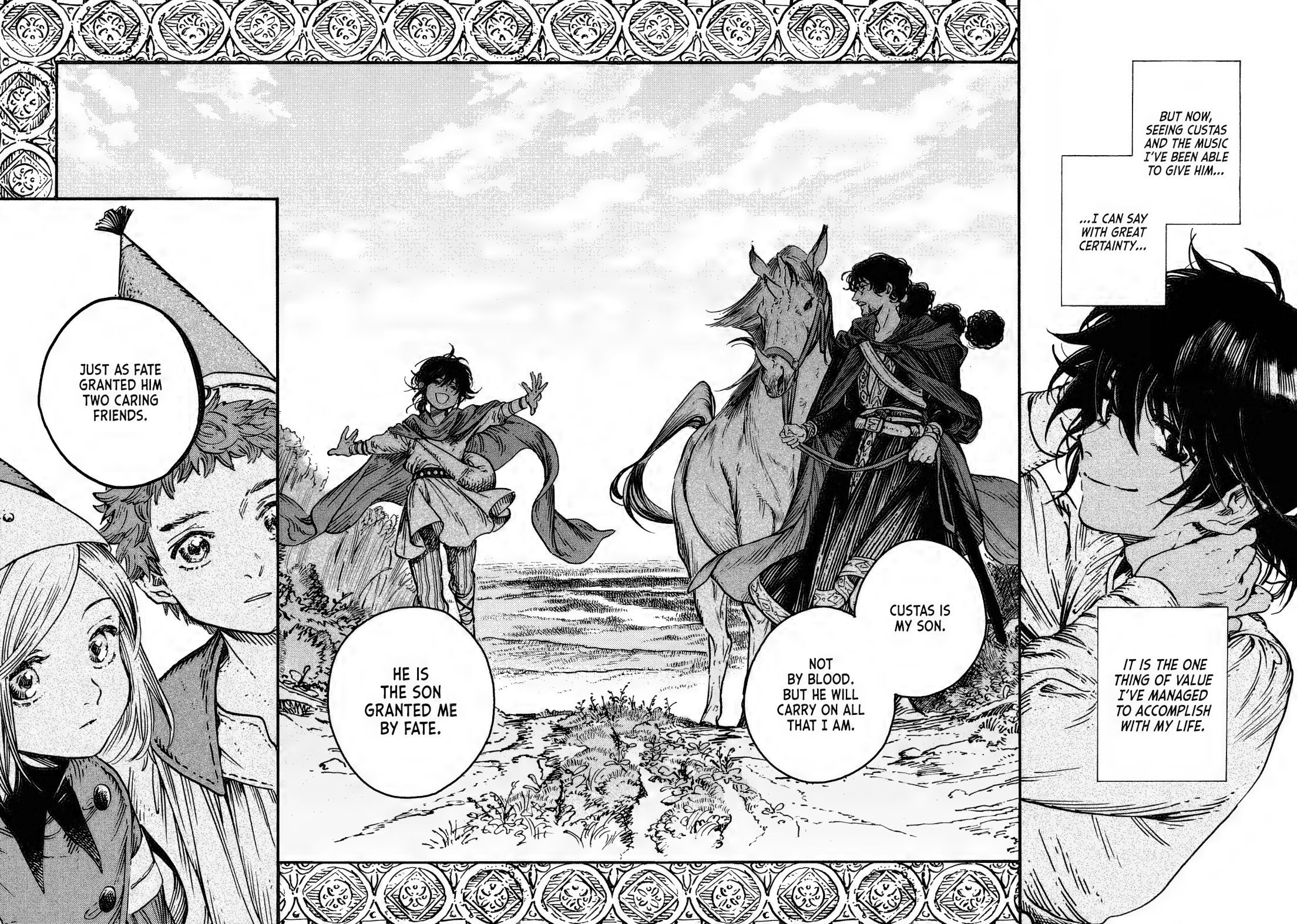
IF YOU MEAN TO STEAL, TAKE MY SKILLS, NOT MY ITEMS.

*AND IN EXCHANGE FOR THE THINGS SHE TAUGHT, SHE ASKED ONLY ONE THING—THAT BEFORE I LEFT THIS EARTH...*

*...I SHOULD HELP ANOTHER BORN OF THE MUCKPOOL. ONE MORE LIFE SAVED WOULD BE PAYMENT ENOUGH.*

*THE OLD WOMAN WHO TAUGHT ME... SHE, TOO, WAS A CHILD OF THE MUCKPOOL.*

AT THE TIME, I WAS YOUNG, AND I THOUGHT HER A GREAT FOOL.


JUST AS FATE GRANTED HIM TWO CARING FRIENDS.
HE IS THE SON GRANTED ME BY FATE.
NOT BY BLOOD. BUT HE WILL CARRY ON ALL THAT I AM.
CUSTAS IS MY SON.
BUT NOW, SEEING CUSTAS AND THE MUSIC I'VE BEEN ABLE TO GIVE HIM...
...I CAN SAY WITH GREAT CERTAINTY...
IT IS THE ONE THING OF VALUE I'VE MANAGED TO ACCOMPLISH WITH MY LIFE.

...

...TO KNOW CUSTAS HAS A DAD LIKE YOU.

I'M REALLY GLAD...

YEAH. ME, TOO.

YOUR MUSIC, I MEAN. I'D LOVE TO HEAR YOU PLAY.

I...I'D LIKE TO HEAR IT.

!

NOTHING WOULD BRING ME MORE PLEASURE.

I SHALL SING OF THE DEEDS OF WITCHES OF YORE.

PERHAPS IF I SING WITH ALL MY HEART, MY TUNE WILL REACH CUSTAS' EARS, TOO.

TUG
L I

TUG
I I

T-TARTAH.

WHAT IS IT, COCO? IS SOMETHING WR—

?

LOOK.

...?

...?!

NO. IT CAN'T BE!

THERE'S A SEAL...

...TATTOOED ON HIS CHEST!

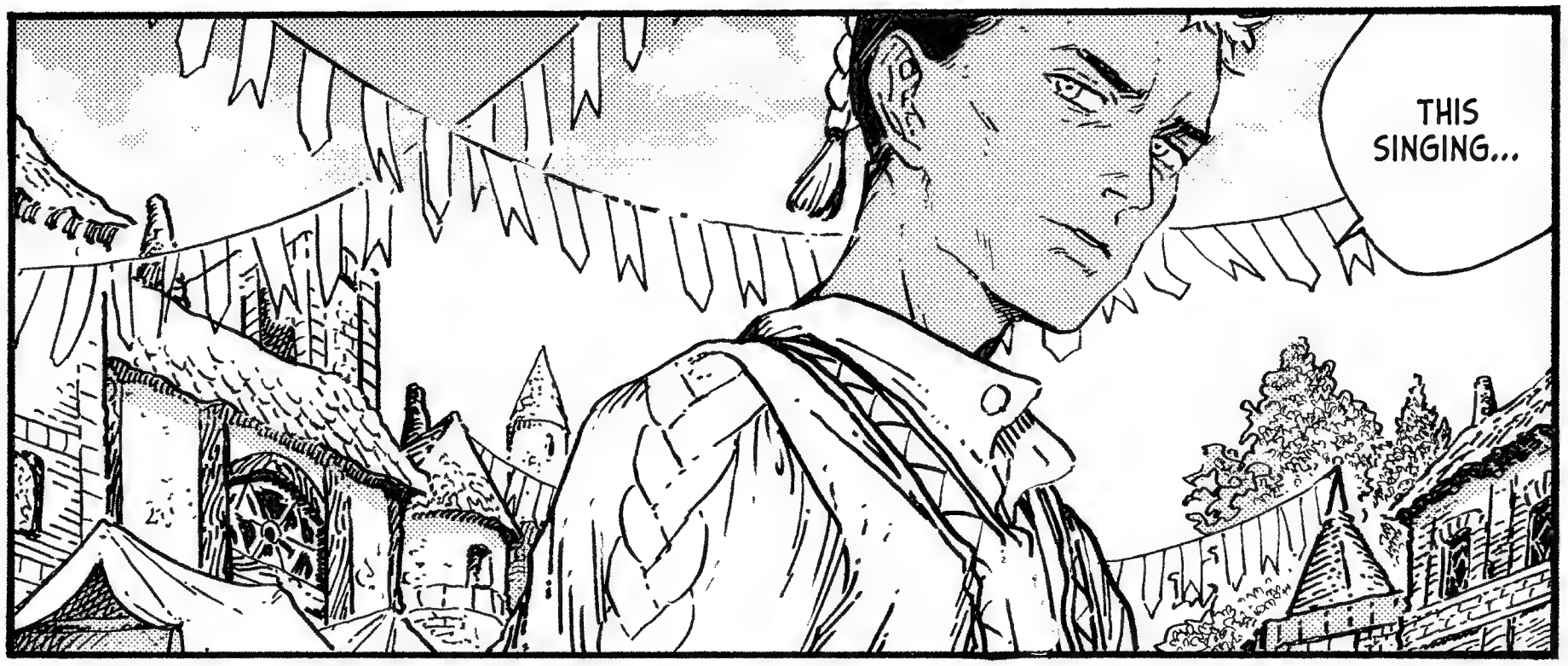
I'VE HEARD IT SOMEWHERE BEFORE.

THAT VOICE...

?

# Witch Hat Atelier

# Chapter 55


THIS SINGING...

GALGA, DEAR!

I'M SURE...
...I'VE HEARD IT SOMEWHERE BEFORE...

LOOK! I GOT US YOUR FAVORITE DARK BEER.
DRINK...
...UP?

...

...BUT YOU'RE BACK IN WORK MODE. WHAT IS IT THIS TIME?

YOU'RE *SUPPOSED* TO BE HAVING A DAY OFF...

THERE'S THAT FACE AGAIN.

NO...

THE MINSTREL'S SONG? WE MUST'VE HEARD A DOZEN LIKE IT ON THE WALK OVER. MAYBE YOU REMEMBER THIS ONE FROM SILVER EVE LAST YEAR?

SORRY, ATWERT.

THIS SINGING. I CAN'T PUT MY FINGER ON IT...

I *KNOW* I'VE HEARD THE VOICE BEFORE...

...BUT *WHERE?*

THE FATHER OF THE BOY WE LENT THE SEALCHAIR TO!

THE STAIRCASE RIVER!

GASP!

OF COURSE!!

...

IT WAS MORE RECENT.

AND SHE WAS HOPING TO FIND THEM HERE AT THE FESTIVAL, TO FOLLOW UP ON THE INCIDENT AT THE RIVER AND ASSESS HOW MUCH THE BOY HAD SEEN.

THERE WAS SOMETHING IN LULUCI'S LATEST REPORT... SHE FOUND IT ODD THEY'D MADE A POINT OF RETURNING THE CHAIR WHEN THE BOY NO LONGER NEEDED IT.

HMPH!

WHAT WILL I EVER DO WITH YOU?

I'LL BE BACK AS SOON AS I'VE PASSED THIS OFF TO THE OTHER KNIGHTS.

SORRY, ATWERT. SOMETHING'S COME UP.

PLEASE DO HURRY BACK!

GO ON, THEN. I'LL BE HERE WAITING.

...THE WAY WE DESCRIBE THE GREAT DEEDS OF YOUR ANCESTORS MIGHT SEEM A BIT FANCIFUL.

IT'S A FAMOUS TUNE AMONG US NORMAL FOLK, BUT I SUPPOSE TO A WITCH'S EARS...

PAUSE

I TAKE IT...

...YOU DON'T CARE TOO MUCH FOR THAT PARTICULAR SONG.

UM!

NO!

IT'S NOT THAT.

MY APOLOGIES IF IT ISN'T VERY ACCURATE TO YOUR EXPERIENCE.

WELL, YOU CERTAINLY DON'T HAVE THE LOOK OF SOMEONE WHO'S ENJOYED A NICE MELODY. SO WHAT IS IT?

OH?

IN FACT, IT'S NOT ABOUT THE SONG AT ALL...

IS IT ME? I WELCOME ANY AND ALL CRITIQUE.

AS A PERFORMER, IT PAINS ME TO SEE MY AUDIENCE UNHAPPY.

KLNK

!

COCO! WAIT!

UM... MISTER DAGDA?

THE TATTOO ON YOUR CHEST.

DO... DO YOU KNOW WHAT IT MEANS? ARE YOU AWARE...

...OF THE POWER IT HOLDS?

TATTOO?

NO. I HAVEN'T THE SLIGHTEST IDEA.

WHEN I AWOKE, IT WAS ALREADY ON ME.

OH. THIS.

THAT'S... A GOOD QUESTION.

WHEN *DID* I GET IT BACK?

HOW DID YOU GET IT BACK?

WHEN THE STAIRCASE RIVER FLOODED, IT GOT SWEPT AWAY.

DO YOU REMEMBER?

AND YOUR LUTE?

LAST I REMEMBER, IT WAS WITH ME AS ALWAYS.

...WHAT HAPPENED BETWEEN KALHN AND EZREST? HOW DID I GET HERE?

COME TO THINK OF IT...

I DON'T KNOW.

I CAN'T REMEMBER.

SEEMS LIKE HIS MIND'S ALL JUMBLED.

I'M BETTING SOMEONE WIPED HIS MEMORY.

...EVEN BEFORE THAT, IT'S BEEN...

EVER SINCE I GOT HERE, AND...

STAGGER

EVERY-THING'S SO HAZY.

OF *COURSE* IT ISN'T.

BUT AT LEAST THAT MEANS THE SEAL PROBABLY ISN'T THERE BY CHOICE.

'CAUSE... 'CAUSE THAT SEAL ON HIS CHEST IS A *COUNTERCLOCK* SPELL!

I'VE NEVER HEARD OF THAT SPELL.

COUNTER-CLOCK...?

!

ZWRM

CUSTAS!

THAT'S RIGHT! I WAS SEARCHING FOR CUSTAS!

OH, CUSTAS...!

I NEED TO KNOW HE'S SAFE!

CUSTAS WOULD'VE BEEN THERE. HE WOULD'VE SEEN!

WHAT HAPPENED TO *ME?*

WHAT HAPPENED TO US?

NOD

WHIRL

I HAVE TO FIND HIM! THERE'S NO TIME TO LOSE!

WHAT... IS THAT SUPPOSED TO MEAN?

PAUSE

I DON'T THINK YOU NEED TO WORRY ABOUT CUSTAS. HE'S PROBABLY DOING JUST FINE.

IF ANYONE'S IN DANGER, I THINK IT'S *YOU*, MISTER DAGDA...

KERCRASH

KRSH
KRSH
KRSH
KRSH
ZRSH
WH...?!
COCO! TARTAH!
STAY BEHIND ME!
WHO ARE YOU?! WHAT DO YOU WANT?!
GASP
OH, NO!
THAT MAN...!

HE WAS THERE, AT THE STAIRCASE RIVER!

HE'S ONE OF THE KNIGHTS MORALIS!

THE ORDER?!

OF ALL THE TIMES TO SHOW UP...

WHY NOW?!

KOFF

KOFF

I FOLLOWED YOUR VOICE EXPECTING TO FIND AN ORDINARY MINSTREL.

SWF

INSTEAD, I DISCOVERED A *SNAKE* WITH SEAL INSCRIBED ON SKIN.

CHAK

KA

KILLING

STEP AWAY FROM THE CHILDREN...

...YOU BRIMMED CAP FIEND!

...?!

I DON'T KNOW WHAT KIND OF DARK POWERS YOU'RE HIDING...

...BUT TAKING INNOCENT CHILDREN HOSTAGE IS LOW, EVEN FOR YOU LOT!

MAY THE PRINCIPLES BE EVER UPHELD...

ZRRK

...AND THE PENNANT'S JUSTICE SWIFT UPON THE GUILTY!!

KLIING

...!

IS HE A FRIEND OF YOURS?

WHY DOES HE ATTACK WITHOUT CAUSE?!

...BUT HE'S NO FRIEND. HE'S A KNIGHT OF THE ORDER!

HE'S A WITCH, ALL RIGHT...

I DON'T UNDERSTAND. IS THIS MAN ANOTHER WITCH?

PRINCIPLES...? THE GUILTY...?

TAK

FWIP

KRAKOOM

THEY'RE THE GROUP THAT DEALS WITH WITCHES WHO BREAK THE RULES!

THE KNIGHTS MORALIS!

RUN, MISTER DAGDA!

YOU MUSTN'T LET THE KNIGHTS CATCH YOU!

YOU WON'T BE GIVEN ANY CHANCE TO EXPLAIN! THEY'LL ASSUME THE WORST AND—

THE TATTOO ON YOUR CHEST IS A VIOLATION OF OUR PRINCIPLES!

!!

WHY?

YOU SAY THEY'LL PUNISH ME FOR THIS MARK...

...EVEN THOUGH I KNOW NOT WHAT IT IS OR HOW I CAME OF IT?

THIS IS THE JUSTICE YOU WITCHES LIVE BY?

WE WILL SPEAK LATER. FOR NOW, LET US RUN.

GWIP

APOLOGIES. IT'S NOT YOU TWO WHO DESERVE MY ANGER.

...AND... AND WE THINK SO, TOO, BUT...!

I KNOW IT SOUNDS BAD...

It, GASP

...THAT A MAN WHO ATTACKS WITH-OUT WARNING IS NOT LIKELY TO SHARE WORDS.

EVEN I CAN SEE...

KAKRSH

PITTER

WHY?!

WHY ARE YOU KIDS DEFENDING HIM?!

PATTER

MY WALL OF EARTH!

THAT GIRL! SHE'S THE ONE FROM THE RIVER!

IS SHE IN LEAGUE WITH THE BRIMMED CAPS?!

WERE EAS' SUSPICIONS RIGHT ALL ALONG?

FLICK

AND IF IT'S THE COUNTLESS, UNKNOWN SPELLS OF YORE I'M UP AGAINST...

NO... IT COULD BE SHE'S BEING CONTROLLED.

WHO KNOWS WHAT FOUL, FORBIDDEN MAGIC THEY MAY HAVE ENSNARED HER WITH?

...THEN THE SAFEST COURSE OF ACTION IS TO ELIMINATE ALL UNKNOWN VARIABLES!

SHWOOP

AND I'M BETTING...

...THERE'S A SEAL INSCRIBED SOMEWHERE ON ITS SURFACE.

GOING BY YOUR REACTION, THIS IS A WEAPON *DISGUISED* AS A LUTE.

I GUESSED RIGHT, THEN.

SNAP

NO! MY LUTE!

!

A COUNTER-CLOCK SEAL?

HOIST ヒョイ

SO LET'S JUST SEE...

...EXACTLY WHAT KIND OF MAGIC WE'RE DEALING WITH.

THEN...

...IT *ISN'T* A WEAPON?

FSHHH

DAGDA!

IT'S ALL I HAVE!

IT'S *EVERY-THING* TO M—

GIVE IT BACK!

G...

KOFF

DAGDA! DON'T LEAVE ME!

DON'T DIE!

IT CAN'T BE!

WHY WOULD YOU *DO* SUCH A THING?!

THAT'S WRONG!

KOFF

HACK

SEEP

SLUMP

GREAT SILVER STARS...

DON'T TELL ME THE ONE ON YOUR CHEST IS A COUNTER-CLOCK, TOO?!

DASH

LAY DOWN YOUR WEAPONS AND SURRENDER!

THERE ISN'T A MOMENT TO SPARE. HE NEEDS TO SEE A DOC—

KR

GET AWAY FROM DAGDAH!

KRASH

FWAP

YOU, TOO! GET YOUR PAWS OFF HIM!

CUSTAS!

WOBL

Y...YOU! THE BOY... WITH THE SEALCHAIR...

SLUMP

...

HOW MANY TIMES AM I GONNA HAVE TO REDRAW THIS?!

DANG IT ALL...!

IT HAPPENED AGAIN!

C-COCO? WHAT'S GOING ON?

COUNTER-CLOCK...

WHAT'S A COUNTERCLOCK SEAL? WHY'S EVERYONE SO UPSET?

IT WINDS TIME BACK FOR THE INKPOT. IT'LL LAST PERHAPS A DAY AT MOST.

...THAT GRANTS US JUST A FEW EXTRA MOMENTS.

...IS A HANDY BIT OF MAGIC...

...HAS *NOT* BEEN AVOIDED. WE'VE SIMPLY MANAGED A SLIGHT DELAY.

BUT MAKE NO MISTAKE. THE FATE THAT BEFELL THE POT...

Just enough time to pour the ink into another bottle.

...THE POT MEETS ITS FATE ONCE MORE.

SHRLINK

WHEN THE CLOCK AGAIN CATCHES UP TO THE MOMENT IT FELL...

PLINK

KRKK

THE FACT THAT IT FELL AND SHATTERED HAS NOT CHANGED.

...ALL A COUNTER-CLOCK SEAL DOES.

THAT'S...

IF *THAT'S* THE SPELL ON MISTER DAGDA'S CHEST, THEN...!

OH, NO...

THEN THAT MEANS...

I *KNOW*, ALL RIGHT?!

I'VE BEEN BRINGIN' DAGDA BACK LIKE THIS, FOREVER.

FROM THE MORNING WE LEFT KALHN...

...TO THE MOMENT HE DIED.

CHAPTER 55 ♦ END

# Witch Hat Atelier

I THOUGHT WE'D FINALLY ESCAPED FATE'S GRIMY PAWS.

I REALLY BELIEVED...

...THAT THIS TIME WE'D BEEN SAVED.

# Chapter 56

I CAN'T BELIEVE IT. ALL I GOTTA DO IS *DRAW*...

...AND I CAN USE MAGIC, TOO?

MY LUTE! IT'S FIXED! BUT HOW?!

WH...?!

I'D NEVER WORRY ABOUT COLD...

...OR BE SCARED OF STORMS OR WILD BEASTS.

WITH MAGIC, I'D BE ABLE TO HUNT AND GET FRESH WATER LIKE IT WAS NOTHIN'.

BUT THEN I LEARNED THE TRUTH.

THEY'VE GOT THE POWER TO DO ANY-THING THEY WANT!

HOW COULD THEY NOT BE?

NO WONDER THEY'RE SOFT.

NO WONDER THEY'RE ALL STARRY-EYED ABOUT LIFE.

WHY?

THE MIRACLE DIDN'T LAST.

WHY?!

WHY...?!

WHY?!

WHY WON'T IT—?!

HOW COME IT'S HAPPEN-ING...

...AGAIN?

NO MATTER HOW MANY TIMES I DRAW IT...

...HE ALWAYS ENDS UP BACK AT THE MOMENT HE DIED! *WHY?!*

GWIP

YOU MUST FORGIVE US.

THE ART IS NOT INFALLIBLE. NOT YET.

MAGIC'S TRUE POTENTIAL WAS LOST...

...ON THE DAY OF THE PACT, WHEN THE MOST USEFUL SPELLS...

...WERE SEALED AWAY BY THE POINTED CAPS.

THE POWER TO FIGHT...

THE POWER TO TRANS-FORM...

...AND MOST OF ALL, THE POWER TO *HEAL.*

FWOOSH

WE SHALL WIELD THE POWER TO DEFY FATE, NO MATTER THE PRICE.

AND WE WILL. IT IS ONLY A MATTER OF TIME.

WE OF THE BRIMS SEEK TO RESTORE THE SPELLS OF YORE.

ZRM

ZRM

ZRM

DOES THAT SPARK YOUR INTEREST, YOUNG CUSTAS?

YOU MEAN BREAK *FREE* OF IT?

DEFY FATE...?

WOULD YOU NOT AID US, AND CAST YOUR LOT WITH OURS?

...AGAINST THE IMMUTABLE CURRENT OF TIME.

THE COUNTER-CLOCK SEAL...

...IS BUT A FLEETING, FRUITLESS STRUGGLE...

ALL IS CONSIGNED TO THE FATE IT HAS ALREADY MET.

A SHATTERED INKPOT WILL EVENTUALLY CRUMBLE.

FOOD MUST EVENTUALLY SPOIL.

HE HAS NO IDEA HOW HE GOT TO EZREST OR WHY HIS ROUNDLUTE IS FIXED...

SO... *THAT'S* WHY MISTER DAGDA DOESN'T REMEMBER.

IT IS A STRUGGLE WE CANNOT WIN.

FATE IS ALWAYS WAITING WHEN THE CLOCK REACHES ITS MOMENT ONCE AGAIN.

B...BUT...

IT'S HIS *MEMORY*, TOO!

...BECAUSE IT'S NOT JUST HIS BODY THAT'S BEING TURNED BACK.

...DOES THAT MEAN HE'LL HAVE TO BE LIKE THIS *FOREVER?!*

THAT'S WHY COUNTERCLOCK SHOULD *NEVER* BE INSCRIBED ON THE SKIN.

*TRAPPED IN THIS CYCLE ALL BY HIMSELF...*

*NEVER ABLE TO MOVE FORWARD...*

*FORCED TO REPEAT THE SAME DAY OVER AND OVER...*

SO WHAT ABOUT THE PRICE?! SO WHAT ABOUT THE DANGER?!

I JUST WANT DAGDA TO KEEP LIVING!!

IF I DON'T DRAW, THE SEAL FADES, AND HE BLEEDS OUT!

I CAN'T HAVE THAT!

I CAN'T...

MY NEW FRIENDS TELL ME...

...WE'LL FIND IT SOMEDAY. A WAY TO BEAT FATE.

THE PRICE THAT COMES WITH SALVATION IS MUCH TOO—

THEN WHAT'S YOUR IDEA, HUH?!

ARE YOU SAYING I SHOULD HAVE LET HIM DIE?!

I WON'T LET HIM DIE.

AND UNTIL THEN, I...

*...I'M* THE ONE WHO'S GONNA KEEP DAGDA SAFE.

HE *CAN'T* DIE...

ﾄﾛﾛﾛ PLIPLIP ﾄﾛﾛﾛ

!

...CUT IT OUT.

WHAT GIVES *YOU* THE RIGHT TO CRY, COCO?

FLUMP

I'M SORRY...

IT JUST... IT HURTS SO MUCH TO SEE...

I'M SAD, AND I ACHE, AND I HURT...

...BECAUSE NONE OF THIS IS YOUR FAULT, AND STILL YOU HAVE TO SUFFER...

IT'S JUST TOO MUCH!

I CAN'T BEAR IT!

AND NOW...

...ALL THIS...

*WE'RE THE ONES WHO SHOULD'VE TOLD YOU ABOUT MAGIC...*

*...AND HOW DANGEROUS IT IS TO DRAW SPELLS YOU DON'T KNOW AND HAVE NO IDEA HOW TO USE!*

HE'S DOING EXACTLY WHAT I DID.

HE'S JUST LIKE ME.

...WITHOUT ANY OF THE KNOWLEDGE...

...WITHOUT ANYONE OR ANYTHING TO STEER HIM FROM TRAGEDY.

HE REACHED OUT AND GRASPED THE PEN...

JUST LIKE ME.

IF I'D KNOWN THE COUNTERCLOCK SEAL...

I WOULD'VE REACHED FOR THE SOLUTION IN FRONT OF MY EYES...

...I WOULD HAVE USED IT, TOO, THE DAY I TURNED MY MOTHER TO STONE.

...WITHOUT KNOWING OR CARING ABOUT ITS PRICE OR ITS HORROR.

FWAP

I'M SORRY... SO SORRY, CUSTAS.

I DIDN'T SEE IT BEFORE, THAT YOU'RE JUST LIKE ME.

I'M SO SORRY.

FWAP

GOOD MAGIC CAN HARM...

...JUST AS HERBS BECOME POISON IN UNSKILLED HANDS.

WH...?

...BUT PLEASE GIVE ME A CHANCE. I WANT TO FIND A WAY TO HELP YOU.

...I'LL APOLOGIZE FOREVER IF I HAVE TO...

PLEASE...

NOT A WAY THAT USES FORBIDDEN MAGIC.

NOT ONE THAT COMES WITH AN AWFUL PRICE ATTACHED.

A PROPER WAY. A *GOOD* WAY!

WHEN THERE'S SOMETHING I *CAN'T* DO, I TURN IT INTO SOME-THING I *CAN.*

THERE'S NO WAY THAT'S GONNA HAPPEN.

WH...

YOU'RE *CRYIN'* AND SAYIN' YOU'RE *SORRY...*

...AND NOW YOU ACT LIKE THIS'LL END HAPPILY EVER AFTER?!

I ***HAVE*** TO.

...

COCO...

DO YOU TWO REALLY NOT SEE THE OBVIOUS SOLUTION?

TIME OUT

WHOA, WHOA. HOLD ON A TICK.

THERE ARE OTHER PEOPLE WHO CAN DO WHAT WE CAN'T.

BUNCHES OF 'EM, ALL AROUND THE CITY!

WE'RE TRY-ING TO SAVE DAGDA'S LIFE, RIGHT?

WHY FOCUS ON MAGIC WHEN THERE'S ANOTHER WAY?

OH.

I'M TALKING ABOUT *DOCTORS.*

PLICK

BACK AT THE HOSPITAL IN KALHN...

...I HEARD A RUMOR. SOMETHING *BIG.*

THEY SAY THE BEST DOCTOR OF ALL IS RIGHT HERE IN EZREST.

AND IT'S NONE OTHER THAN THE PENINSULAR KING HIMSELF!

WE MIGHT BE ABLE TO SAVE HIM!

WE COULD STOP RELYING ON THE COUNTERCLOCK SEAL!

BUT WE'LL GET TO *MEET* HIM AT THE PROCESSION!

DON'T YOU SEE?!

THE KING OF ZOZAH?!

...AT THE EXACT MOMENT THE SPELL WEARS OFF...!

IF WE CAN GET THE KING TO TREAT DAGDA...

PROBABLY FEELS LIKE WE'RE TWISTING THIS AROUND FOR OUR OWN SAKE AGAIN...

HE'D REALLY BE FREE OF THE CYCLE...?

NOW HERE WE ARE, TELLING YOU WE WANT TO HELP AGAIN.

GWIP

...AND BECAUSE OF THAT, WE DIDN'T WARN YOU ABOUT THE DANGER OF FORBIDDEN SPELLS.

PRINCIPLES OR NOT, WE HID THE TRUTH OF MAGIC FROM YOU...

...

I'M NOT EXPECTING YOU TO FORGIVE US.

I'M NOT DOING THIS TO MAKE MYSELF FEEL BETTER.

AND I DON'T THINK IT'S RIGHT IF THE WAY WE SAVE HIM...

...MEANS HE'LL HAVE TO PAY SOME AWFUL PRICE.

I JUST WANNA SEE DAGDA WELL AGAIN.

'CAUSE...

WHAT A LOAD OF CRAP.

LET ME GUESS. 'CAUSE "MAGIC EXISTS TO MAKE PEOPLE HAPPY"?

YOU TWO NEVER CHANGE, DO YOU?

IN YOUR HEADS, THE WORLD'S ALL BLUE SKIES AND SUNNY DAYS.

GRRNP

SHWOOM

JUST AS LONG AS YOU MAKE SURE WE'VE GOT A SPOT IN THAT PROCESSION!

YOU WANNA WASTE TIME ON THIS DOCTOR THING? GO AHEAD.

DO WHATEVER YOU WANT.

I DON'T CARE.

FWAP

The Royal Naptime

Mean-while, in the castle...

BUT IF HE REALLY *DIDN'T* KNOW, AND IT'S THE BRIMMED CAPS WHO WANT TO GET CLOSE TO THE KING...

?

WHAT IS IT?

...

CUSTAS IS A MINSTREL, RIGHT?

DON'T YOU THINK IT'S WEIRD THAT IN ALL HIS TRAVELS, AND IN ALL THE SONGS HE PICKED UP, HE'S NEVER HEARD TALES OF THE KING?

...THEN WHAT, I WONDER, ARE THEY AFTER?

YOU CAN SAY THAT AGAIN...

ALL I KNOW IS THAT WE'D BETTER BE CAREFUL.

I CAN'T EVEN BEGIN TO IMAGINE.

A CURE WITHOUT A PRICE...

THMP

IS SUCH A THING...

...REALLY POSSIBLE?

AH. HOW FORTUNATE.

YOU ARE STILL WHERE CUSTAS LEFT YOU.

...IF WORD WERE TO SPREAD OF OUR PRESENCE HERE...

...OR OF COCO AND TARTAH'S INVOLVEMENT.

IT WOULD BE DISADVANTAGEOUS FOR US...

スト

TMP

DON'T...

W... WAIT...

RUMMAGE RUMMAGE

TO KEEP THAT FROM HAPPENING, I AM AFRAID I MUST ASK YOU TO FORFEIT YOUR MEMORIES.

?

?

BUT OF COURSE.

THE SEAL YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT...

IT'S THE ONE *WE* USE... TO ERASE CRIMINALS' MINDS OF ANY TRACE OF MAGIC!

AND FOR A WITCH BORN IMMERSED IN THE ART...

...THERE EXIST NO MEMORIES WITH MAGIC UNENTANGLED.

TOO BAD. SO SAD.

PLEASE ACCEPT MY DEEPEST REGRETS.

MEANING THAT FOR YOU, THIS SPELL EQUATES TO A MIND ENTIRELY WIPED.

I AM DOING NOTHING HERE THAT YOU WOULD NOT DO YOURSELF.

...AND GO ON PRETENDING THE PEOPLE THEY ERASED NEVER EXISTED AT ALL.

OF COURSE, I *AM* ONLY ACTING IN YOUR FASHION. THE POINTED CAPS DO LOVE TO ERASE INCONVENIENCES...

IF A BRIMMED CAP WERE TO BEG MERCY, WOULD YOU STAY YOUR HAND?

IF YOU FIND MY ACTIONS SO UNNERVING, PERHAPS YOU SHOULD STOP FOR A MOMENT TO CONSIDER YOUR OWN.

DO NOT WEEP.

YOU'RE SURE TO HAVE PLENTY OF COMPANY...

...AS THERE ARE OH SO MANY OTHERS WHOSE MEMORIES HAVE BEEN STOLEN BY ONE WITCH OR ANOTHER.

IN ANY CASE...

...GOOD-BYE, DEAR KNIGHT.

TMP
TMP
TMP
TMP
TMP
SORRY, MISTER!
IT WAS AN ACCIDENT!
SLOW DOWN, CHILDREN!
AND BE SURE TO WATCH WHERE YOU'RE GOING!
OOF!
EEP!
WHAM
KLIK
OH, GALGA, MY DEAR...
...WHERE COULD YOU BE?

# Witch Hat Atelier

# Chapter 57

THE WITCH WHO BROUGHT HIM TO US CLAIMS TO HAVE FOUND HIM COLLAPSED NEAR THE MUCKPOOL...

...AND THAT UPON DISCOVERY, HE WAS ALREADY IN THIS STATE.

...

SURELY YOU'RE NOT SERIOUS. IT'S THE MUCKPOOL!

AT THE FIRST SIGN OF STRIFE, THE ROGUES LIVING THERE SCURRY OFF, LIPS SEALED TIGHT!

SIR?

ANY WITNESSES?

I'D EXPECT THE STRUGGLE WAS ANYTHING BUT QUIET.

THE WOUNDS SUGGEST HE WAS ATTACKED.

AND THAT IS UNDOUBTEDLY WHY HE WASN'T FOUND UNTIL IT WAS TOO LATE.

DO YOU KNOW WHO *YOU* ARE?

SHAKE

SHAKE

DO YOU KNOW WHO I AM?

EAS.

...

SHAKE

SHAKE

O...OF COURSE...

THIS IS THE GUY WHO FOUND HIM.

MISTER ATWERT. COULD YOU RUN US THROUGH IT ONCE MORE?

GALGA HAD BEEN ACTING A LITTLE STRANGE.

HE CAUGHT SOME STRAINS OF MUSIC... A SONG HE SAID HE RECOGNIZED.

SHORTLY AFTER THAT, HE TOLD ME HE HAD SOME DUTIES TO ATTEND TO.

HE HEADED OFF DOWN AN ALLEY.

GASP

I HEARD...

I HEARD HIM MENTION THE STAIRCASE RIVER.

J-JUST A MINSTREL'S SINGING.

WHAT SORT OF SONG?

IT'S NOTHING SOLID, BUT...

WHAT IS IT, LULUCI? DO YOU HAVE ANY INSIGHT?

...COMES TO MIND.

YES. ONE PARTICULAR POSSIBILITY...

THE RIVER NEAR KALHN.

*DOES IT INVOLVE THE BOY WHO RETURNED THE SEAL-CHAIR?*

*WH... WHO ARE YOU?*

GALGA TOLD ME HE'D BE RIGHT BACK. AFTER A FEW CLOCK MARKS, I GREW WORRIED...

...AND WENT LOOKING FOR HIM.

BUT WHEN I FOUND HIM...

GALGA APPEARS TO HAVE LOST ALL KNOWLEDGE OF MAGIC.

WILL...

WILL THE STOLEN MEMORIES EVER...?

WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN TO HIM NOW?!

...WHICH WILL DOUBTLESS MAKE IT VERY HARD FOR HIM TO GO ON LIVING AS A WITCH.

HE'LL HAVE GAPS PERTAINING TO THE MOST ORDINARY FACETS OF OUR WAY OF LIFE...

...HE'LL BE SENT TO ADANLEE, THE ISLE OF OBLIVION.

AFTER HE'S NURSED BACK TO HEALTH IN THE HEALING SPIRE...

CAPTAIN VINANNA...

A...

***ADANLEE?!*** IS THIS SOME CRUEL JOKE?!

...AFTER THEIR MINDS HAVE BEEN STRIPPED OF MAGIC!

IT'S A PLACE TO PREPARE MISCREANTS FOR LIVES IN THE OUTSIDE WORLD...

THAT'S THE ISLE WHERE *BANISHED* WITCHES ARE SENT!

THERE *HAS* TO BE ANOTHER WAY!

YOU'RE NOT SUGGESTING TURNING GALGA INTO AN OUTSIDER, ARE YOU?!

H...HOW COULD YOU DO THAT?!

SOME SECRET SPELL PERMITTED ONLY TO THE KNIGHTS!

IF THERE'S A SEAL TO ERASE MEMORIES, THERE MUST BE ANOTHER TO BRING THEM *BACK!*

WE DO NOT.

SPELLS TO RESTORE THE MIND FALL IN THE REALM OF HEALINGCRAFT.

LORD VINANNA, SURELY THE THREE HAVE SOME KNOWLEDGE OF A WAY TO...

OR THE WISE ONES!

THAT ALL ARE FORBIDDEN *EQUALLY* FORMS THE CORNERSTONE OF OUR PRINCIPLES.

AMONG THE FORBIDDEN SPELLS, THERE IS NO LESSER OR GREATER OFFENSE.

...WE'D BEST NOT SET OUR HOPES TOO HIGH, LORD ATWERT.

SWAY

...BUT GIVEN GALGA'S PRESENT STATE...

IN EXCEPTIONAL CASES, SOME WIPED MEMORIES MAY NATURALLY RETURN...

SLUMP

TH...

THE *PRINCIPLES?!*

GALGA MEANS THE WORLD TO ME!

HE'S YOUR *COMRADE*, ISN'T HE?!

YOU'D THROW A *LIFE* AWAY OVER A FEW RULES?!

!

はGASP!

チャキ
CHAK

SOMEWHERE IN HIS HEAD, THERE'RE CLUES TO HELP FIND WHO DID THIS!

DOESN'T THAT WARRANT *SOME* KIND OF EXCEPTION?!

NEVER.

THERE CAN BE *NO* EXCEPTIONS.

DO NOT LET ME HEAR YOU QUESTION THE PRINCIPLES AGAIN.

THESE THINGS ARE NOT FOR *US* TO DE—

EASTHIES!

STAY YOUR TONGUE.

YOU DIVULGE TOO MUCH.

WHAP

TAK TAK

IF YOU HAPPEN TO RECALL ANY FURTHER DETAILS, DO LET US KNOW!

I'M SORRY, BUT REGULATION STIPULATES THAT GALGA IS ONLY TO BE TURNED OVER TO THE CARE OF A MASTER OR APPRENTICE, OR TO *FAMILY.*

LORD ATWERT...

11" BEAM

H-HOLD ON...!

THERE'S STILL MORE I'D LIKE TO—

SHOVE

SHOVE

WE APPRECIATE THE HELP YOU'VE PROVIDED.

SHOVE

I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU'D DO THIS!

SEND GALGA OFF TO THE ISLE OF OBLIVION?!

THEM'S THE BREAKS.

...CAN'T BELIEVE THIS...

I FEEL BAD FOR YOU. I DO. IT'S JUST...

I'LL FIND A WAY TO BRING GALGA BACK. JUST YOU WAIT!

SWIPE

HAVE YOU NO HEARTS?!

YOU MAY HAVE GIVEN UP ON HIM, BUT *I* WON'T!

ヒョイ PEEK

YOU TWO HEAR THAT?

NO HEARTS, HUH?

ヒョコ PEEK

NOT JUST ANGRY. *FURIOUS.*

POMF

HE CAN'T SERIOUSLY BELIEVE WE AREN'T ANGRY ABOUT THIS.

YEAH. IF YA ASK ME, THAT WAS A PRETTY *HEARTLESS* THING TO SAY.

WE'RE GONNA FIND THE BRIMMED CAPS THAT DID THIS.

AND THEY'RE GONNA PAY *DEARLY.*

NICE DOIN' BUSINESS WITH YA!

HOPE WE MADE YOUR DAY A LITTLE *RICHEH!*

THANKS FOR STOPPING BY!

GOOD, GOOD.

GLAD TO HEAR YOU'VE ENJOYED IT!

MAGIC SHOP IS TOTALLY FOR ME!

I LOVE PLAYING MAGIC SHOP!

WE SOLD A TON AGAIN TODAY!

I'M STILL GOIN' STRONG!

PWEE!

BUT I'M NOT TIRED YET! I CAN KEEP HELPING!

YOU MEAN TODAY WAS OUR SHOP'S LAST DAY?!

Lemme carry that, Grandpa!

WELL, S'POSE WE OUGHTA START PACKING UP!

だる
OOF-RUGGIO...

ぎょ

...IS TO KNOW WHEN TO STOP.

NOW, LISTEN HERE, GIRLS.

THE SECRET TO FUN, FULFILLING WORK...

UM... SORRY TO BOTHER YOU WHEN YOU'RE TIRED, BUT...

When can we go hooome?

I just wanna sleep...

HE'S RIGHT, GIRLS...

THE BURN-OUT IS REAL...

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO LEADING BY EXAMPLE?

Yes, Master!

IF I ONLY TEACH YOU *ONE* THING, HERE IT IS— DON'T BE ME.

YOUR SPELL. YOU'RE DONE, RIGHT?

He recovered!

HUH?

PLA

PLIIING

GIVE IT HERE.

NO NEED TO HESITATE. NOTHIN' CHARGES ME UP QUICKER...

...THAN THE CHANCE TO CHECK OUT A BRAND NEW SEAL.

GIRLS? ARE YOU ALL HERE?
MASTER QIFREY!
COME OUTSIDE!
YOU SIMPLY *MUST* SEE THIS!
WHAT IS ALL THIS?

FW
UP
LOOK! IT'S THE WYRMHERDERS OF THE DRAGONPASS ISLES!
AND THE NEEDLEWORK SPRITES OF THE FORESTLANDS!
Do you need a boost?
IT'S THE GOLDEN EVE PROCESSION!
A PARADE FOR THE LEADERS OF THE *REGULAR* FOLK!
REGULAR FOLK...?
AND... OH!
SHOOMP
TETIA? WHAT'S THE MATTER?
!
*EOLEO'S THERE, TOO...*

M... MAYBE LATER...

THOUGHT YOU WANTED TO SEE THE WHISKERCATS.

HERE'S YOUR BIG CHANCE.

?

I JUST WANTED TO GET A GLIMPSE, SO I'D KNOW WHAT HE'S LIKE...

LOOKS LIKE THE KING ISN'T IN THE PARADE.

NO... IT'S NO BIG DEAL...

YOU SOUND DISAP-POINTED.

...BUT WE MUST REMEMBER, WITCHES AREN'T THE ONLY INHABITANTS OF THIS WORLD.

THE FINAL NIGHT OF THE CELEBRATIONS CAPS OFF WITH THE WITCHES' SILVER EVE PROCESSION...

SILVER EVE IS A TIME FOR WITCHES AND NORMAL FOLK TO COME TOGETHER...

...TO SING TO THE EVENING AND GAZE UPON THE STARS HAND IN HAND.

I'M STARTING TO WONDER WHY THEY'RE SEPARATE TO BEGIN WITH...

WITCHES AND NORMAL FOLK...

CAREFUL, COCO!

COME BACK OVER HERE WHERE IT'S LIGHT.

STEER CLEAR OF THOSE ALLEYWAYS. AND KEEP *ESPECIALLY* FAR FROM THE MUCKPOOL!

ALL SORTS OF DANGERS LURK IN THE DARK.

*IF ONLY HE KNEW.*

*I'VE ALREADY GLIMPSED DOWN THOSE DARK PATHS,*

*JUST BEYOND THE SUN'S REACH.*

*AND I KNOW... PEOPLE LIVE THERE, TOO.*

...

SLINK

FWUMP

FOOMP

TAK TAK コン！

YOU STILL AWAKE?

YOU SHOULD GET SOME SLEEP.

COCO?

WHAT DO I DO, AGOTT?

COCO...?

C...

What am I gonna do?

I HAVE TO KEEP DRAWING.

I'm not gonna make it.

This is bad.

I HAVE TO KEEP DRAWING.

I can't do it.

SEEP しゃ...

I HAVE TO KEEP DRAWING...

...BUT THE LINES WON'T COME OUT.

I CAN'T DRAW ANYMORE.

AGOTT, WHAT DO I DO?!

TURNING THE THINGS WE CAN'T DO
INTO THINGS WE CAN.

# THAT'S THE SORT OF MAGIC WE BELIEVE IN.

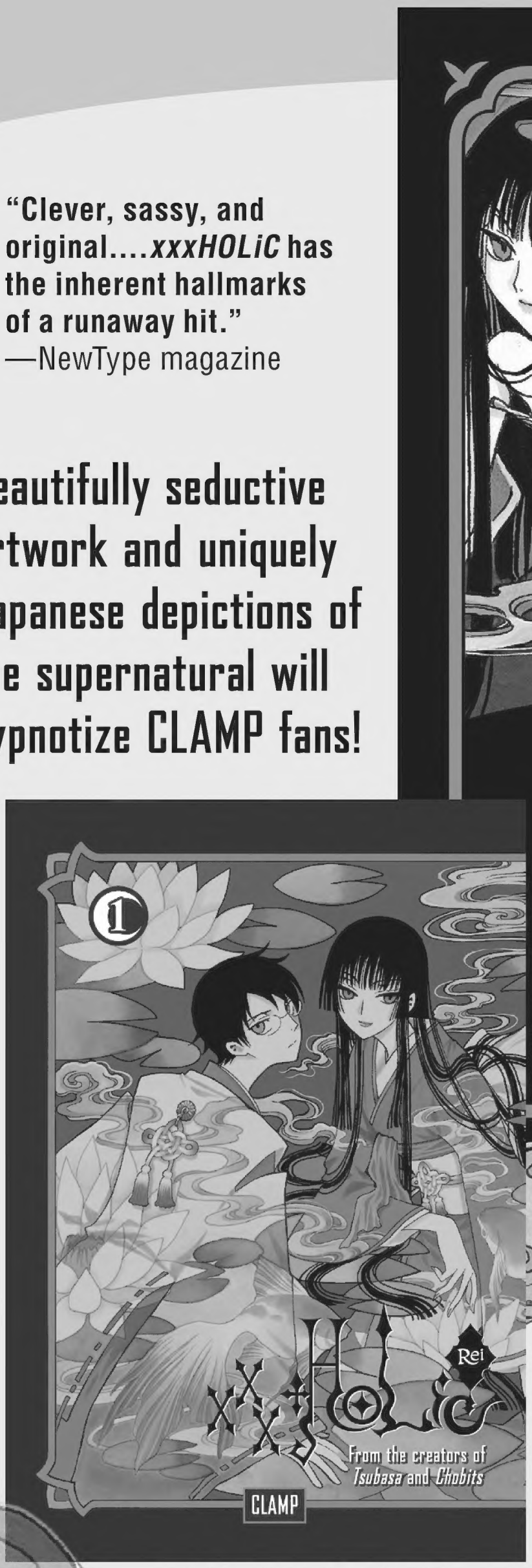
---

With the procession only hours away,
Coco hits a wall and can't draw any further.
Meanwhile, the Knights Moralis hasten their
search for the Brimmed Caps responsible
for wiping Galga's mind.
As morning dawns on the final day of
Silver Eve, this storm of hopes, dreams,
and schemes comes to a head!

Witch Hat Atelier VOLUME 11: COMING SOON!!

**"Clever, sassy, and original....*xxxHOLiC* has the inherent hallmarks of a runaway hit."**
—NewType magazine

## Beautifully seductive artwork and uniquely Japanese depictions of the supernatural will hypnotize CLAMP fans!



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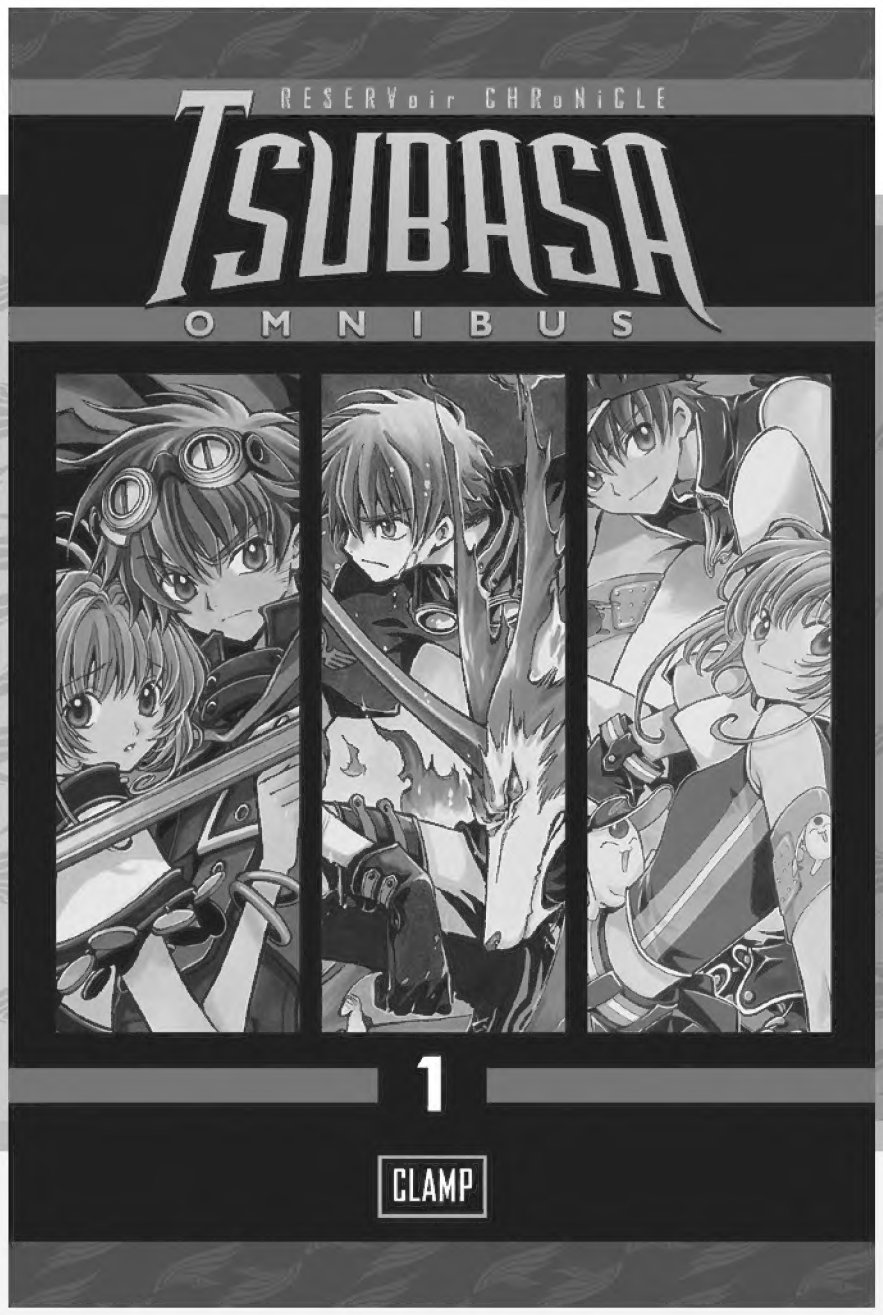
xxxHOLiC Rei © CLAMP·ShigatsuTsuitachi CO.,LTD./Kodansha Ltd.

Kimihiro Watanuki is haunted by visions of ghosts and spirits. He seeks help from a mysterious woman named Yuko, who claims she can help. However, Watanuki must work for Yuko in order to pay for her aid. Soon Watanuki finds himself employed in Yuko's shop, where he sees things and meets customers that are stranger than anything he could have ever imagined.

KC KODANSHA COMICS

# The beloved characters from *Cardcaptor Sakura* return in a brand new, reimagined fantasy adventure!



**"[*Tsubasa*] takes readers on a fantastic ride that only gets more exhilarating with each successive chapter." —Anime News Network**

In the Kingdom of Clow, an archaeological dig unleashes an incredible power, causing Princess Sakura to lose her memories. To save her, her childhood friend Syaoran must follow the orders of the Dimension Witch and travel alongside Kurogane, an unrivaled warrior; Fai, a powerful magician; and Mokona, a curiously strange creature, to retrieve Sakura's dispersed memories!

KC KODANSHA COMICS

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***Witch Hat Atelier 10***

Kodansha Digital Edition

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